

# MATWATCH

213 Pine Hills Ave. Auburn Al 36830



JULY 10-16

VOL. 2, NO. 3

## YOUR TURN: ANSWERS FOR THE NWA

One certainty about wrestling fans: if you don't want an opinion from them, don't ask them.

A couple of weeks back, we held our first MATWATCH OPEN LINE telephone poll, asking you to tell us three positive moves you would make to improve the NWA, if you were in control for a day. We had 41 calls during the two-hour period and we've had 19 others address the subject since. So, of the 60 respondents in the unscientific survey, here are the suggestions (Note: with three answers requested, the totals add to 300%):

BETTER LOCAL PROMOTION.....72%  
STEAL TALENT FROM WWF.....55%  
MAKE CELEBRITIES OF TALENT....53%  
BETTER TV TIME SLOTS/STATIONS.40%  
BRING IN BILL WATTS.....28%  
EXPAND JIM CORNETTE'S ROLE....23%  
ENLIVEN HOUSE SHOWS.....11%  
BRING IN RODDY PIPER.....8%  
OTHERS.....10%

MATWATCHERS strongly perceive significant improvement is still needed for NWA local shows. Says Mike Sturkie of Daytona Beach, Fla.: "You can't get the average fan out any more just by saying we're coming to town or running down the card. People have to have a reason to care about the matchups and I don't see a lot of that in the local spots." Adds Jeff Bowdren of Plantation, Fla.: "It seems like the WWF blitzes radio, newspapers and TV to plug its shows. Sometimes, I never see a newspaper ad about the NWA and, then, you don't always get the card."

Bowdren leads the contingent which still believes a talent theft from Titan is essential. "Even if it's a mid-level performer who has talent, they need to steal somebody just to show people they can get them." Bob Hight of Cleveland, Ohio believes, "People I work with believe it's a matter of time before all NWA wrestlers go to the WWF. As long as that idea continues, the NWA is going to keep appearing to be triple-A."

The celebrity issue hits home with heavy TV-watchers. "You turn on ARSENIO HALL, you turn on BOB COSTAS, or REGIS PHILBIN and once a month, you see somebody from the WWF," says

Kirk Crain of Westport, Conn. "Can't the NWA even get Ric Flair on the PAT SAJAK SHOW, or even on LARRY KING LIVE?" Rick Clarke of Camden NJ, offers, "Unless kids begin to see these guys on shows other than wrestling, they're not going to be considered big-time."

The NWA's hiring of Len Ziegel to market syndicated shows full-time should be a boost and I expect some major announcements come fall. But with the current creative quality of TV, I was surprised at the numbers of people still asking for Bill Watts. "I like the NWA shows, particularly the way WCW has picked up," says Tim Thompson of Green Bay WI, "but I believe it would be even better if somebody with the presence of Watts was around. I just think at some point in time, the booking committee will wear out and the Cowboy is the guy you want in control."

The respondents concerning Cornette came in before he assumed the co-host role on NWA POWER HOUR, which should add to his exposure handsomely. But Bowdren says, "Cornette ought to be put in a decision-making role where he can do something." Joe Gibson of Helen, Ga., adds, "Cornette has one of the most creative minds in wrestling and he ought to be on that booking committee."

This is not the scientific research I called for in our anniversary issue. But it does give one a bit of a pulse of fans who analyze wrestling promotions beyond the surface occurrences. And I think some of these ideas are worth a hard look.

## THIS WEEK'S HEADLINES

HOME SHOPPING NETWORK RESCINDS  
PLANS TO BUY ATLANTA'S WVEU STATION

ATLANTA - Only nine days before a planned buyout of Atlanta independent WVEU-TV, Home Shopping Network, Inc., has canceled the deal.

No specific reasons have been given but HSN had a July 7 deadline on completing the purchase. The deal collapse breathes new life for the seven-hour SUPERSTARS OF WRESTLING marathon, co-hosted by Boni Blackstone and John Michaels, WVEU's highest-rated programming block.

SUPERSTARS, which had faced cancellation with an HSN takeover, began on the station in September 1988 after three years on WATL in Atlanta.

# THIS WEEK'S HEADLINES

## CANADIAN ACCIDENT INJURES FOUR CALGARY STARS

CALGARY, Alberta - A vehicle crash in Canada's Northwest Territory has left four babyface stars of the Calgary Stampede promotion, including veteran Davey Boy Smith, injured.

Details of the wreck remain sketchy but the crash involved more than one vehicle. Smith reportedly was thrown through the windshield of the van in which the Stampede stars were riding. He suffered reported severe spinal injuries and may be out of action several months. Jason the Terrible (Karl Moffatt) was said to have suffered a fractured leg in two places.

Also hurt but less seriously were Stampede regulars Chris Benoit and Samohara. Neither is expected to miss more than two weeks of action.

The vehicle came to rest only a few yards from a 1,000-foot drop which would have killed the four-some. The accident occurred barely one year after a similar wreck killed wrestler Adrian Adonis in Canada.

## MEMPHIS TO GO DARK AUG. 1??? SOME STATIONS ARE TOLD YES

MEMPHIS - MATWATCH has learned thirteen U.S. television stations are being surveyed for a possible replacement to the veteran Memphis CWA wrestling show in August.

The management of originating station WMC in Memphis could not be reached for comment. But MATWATCH has spoken to three program managers who say CWA official Randy West has told them the promotion will close in early August "if business doesn't improve."

Stations are being offered WILD WEST WRESTLING, the second hour of the current WORLD CLASS two-hour show aired in Dallas. CWA officials have denied the closing publicly but a number of Memphis stars, including Phil Hickerson, the returning Bill Dundee, Dutch Mantel and the Master of Pain are now either working or being hyped for the Dallas promotion.

## PINFALL PROFILE

**WANTED:** Two good, Midwestern-neutral voice announcers. Preferably between 30-45, good looks can help, a broad knowledge of pro wrestling, a sense of humor and an ability to sell angles. Experience preferred. Good salary and benefits.

Oh, well. A couple of those categories count me out. The decision of former AWA announcer Ken Resnick to reject a slot as host of NWA WORLD WIDE WRESTLING has left TBS in a pickle. The workload on Jim Ross to host up to five hours of wrestling a week and produce seven is mindnumbing. Yet, with the specifications on announcers to aid in syndicating WORLD WIDE to non-Southern markets, the experienced choices are almost nil.

Charlie Platt would be considered too Southern, Marc Lowrance or Don Coss probably not of the quality desired and Lee Marshall was once considered and rejected, though Marshall could probably do the job. I've literally racked my brain to consider who's left. Let's compare notes:

- LARRY MATYSIK. In his early 40s, a first-rate announcer with experience from St. Louis. But I'm told he may be too costly.
- GORDON SOLIE. Wants the job, has the experience. And could be a compromise choice but I know TBS prefers a younger demographic.
- COWBOY BILL WATTS. One of the great communicators on any pro wrestling show and I'd hire him as my host. But there's concern Watts would want to do more than just be a commentator.
- DAVE BROWN. With the folding of Memphis possibly imminent, Dave may be available. He has the pipes but as a popular weatherman outside of the wrestling game, I doubt if Dave would want the travel.
- GARY CAPPETTA. The best ring announcer in the business today, I've suggested to some NWA folks giving Gary an audition to see if he could convert to play-by-play. Just a hunch says he might.
- BOB HOWELL. One of our MATWATCH All-Star announcers. Still a young guy with plenty of experience. He's been out of the ring business and in news for a few years but I'm convinced he'd be great for the NWA.
- TIM WOODS. One of the most articulate voices of any former wrestler, a handsome guy and capable at the mike. I just don't know where Tim is.
- JESSE VENTURA. He has no firm term contract with Vince and his name recognition alone can boost sales of WORLD WIDE. Howell/Ventura, Cappetta/Ventura or Solie/Ventura might be a great bill. He's valuable enough, I'd even give a shot to Jesse at play-by-play.

Fact is, we're already at the point I suggested we were two months ago in a SIDELIGHTS detailing how dry the crop of small promotion announcers is today. If none of these guys pan out, maybe it's time for the NWA to run a week-long announcers' camp. Somewhere in the U.S., there has to be a jewel.

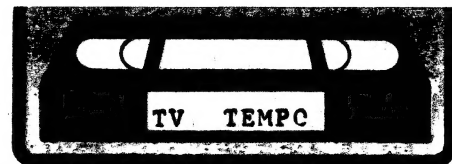
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(SCW) - Brad Armstrong d. The Invader; Ga. Power d. Ninja Warriors (Billy White/Steve Bennett); Mr. Atlanta d. Bobby Bennett; Mr. Wrestling II vs. Steve Lawler ends in pull-apart; David Sammartino vs. Mike Golden ends in melee. RESTHOLD.

(ACW) - Colt Steel d. Tommy Seabolt; L.A. Stephens d. David Isley; Grizzly Boone d. Frank Fargo; Ken Shamrock wins DQ over Tai; Brad Anderson d. Jack Jackson; Robert Wilson/Mitch Snow vs. unnamed masked team in progress at show's end. BOMB-PLUS.

(STAMPEDE) - Angel of Death d. Ken Johnson; Jason the Terrible d. Goldie Rogers but is jumped by Angel on floor after; Davey Boy Smith d. Volkan Singh; Ricky Rice d. Kerry Brown; Dynamite Kid d. Sumohara; Johnny Smith double countout vs. Chris Benoit; Bruce Hart wins DQ over Larry Cameron. DRAW-PLUS.

(CWA/SYND.) - CWA TAG TITLE: Billy Travis/Action Jackson win DQ over Wildside when Chris Champion uses chair; Southern Force d. Chris Frazier/Deuce Mason; Max Pain/Dutch Mantel d. Alan Napier/Ken Raper; D.I. Bob Carter/Spike Huber d. Thompson/Hall; Jerry Lawler/Freddy d. Keith Eric/Keith Roberson. DRAW.

(WEF/SYND.) - [CHALLENGE]: Jim Duggan d. Jim Megan; Tully & Arn d. Sonny Rogers/Red Tyler; Hercules d. Butler Stevens; Barbarian d. Ray Oakley; Bad News Brown d. Larry Larson; Barry Widowmaker d. Todd Becker; Hart Foundation d. Boris Zhukov/Jake Milliman. FEATURES: Mean Gene w. Demolition; Dusty as carhop. BOMB-PLUS.

[SPOTLIGHT]: Foghorn Leghorn d. Megan; Ted DiBiase d. Ron Fails; Harts d. Oakley/Brian Costello; Brown d. Tyler; Koko B. Ware d. Zhukov; Curt Hennig d. Jim Evans; Rockers d. Barry Horowitz/Tom Stone. BOMB-PLUS.

[SUPERSTARS]: Jimmy Snuka d. Stone; Twin Towers d. Megan/Fails; Dino Bravo loses DQ to Brad Perry when ref Ronnie Garvin stops Bravo attack. Garvin & Bravo brawl after; Rockers d. Tom Burton/Dusty Wolfe; Koko B. Ware d. Harley Manson; Hennig d. Scott Colton; Greg Valentine d. Frankie DeFalco. BRO. LUV: Randy Savage & Zeus challenge Hulk Hogan & Brutus Beefcake. VIDEO: "No Holds" music piece. RESTHOLD.

(WCW) - Bill Dundee d. Super Zodiac II; P.Y. Chu'i d. Dwayne Meaders but Eric Embry saves from post-match attack; CWA TITLE: Jeff Jarrett d. Robert Fuller; Al Perez d. Alex Parteau; Kevin & Kerry Von Erich win DQ over Ice-man Parsons/Brickhouse Brown. VIDEO: Dutch

ANGLE: Al Perez goes off w. Skandor Akbar to discuss "contract;" PREVIEW: P.Y.-Embry brawl skedded for next week. DRAW-PLUS.

(FLORIDA) - FLA. TITLE: Kendall Windham d. Dustin Rhodes for belt holding tights; Nick Busich d. Brady Higgins; Ho Chi Wen d. Mike Awesome; Manny Fernandez d. El Diablo; Steve Keirn d. Ric Diamond; Al Perez d. Coconut Kid; Playboys (Jim Backlund/Brett Sawyer) win DQ over Nasty Boys when Brian Knobbs is caught with Backlund's knucks. VIDEO: Lou Perez workout. POWERSLAM.

(WEF/USA) - MAIN EVENT: Rockers d. Valentine/Bravo when Ronnie Garvin reverses decision; Harts d. Zhukov/Milliman; Bad News d. Larson; Hercules d. Stevens; Twins d. Evans/Fails; Demolition d. Curtis/Stone. BRO. LUV: Martel-Santana brawl. COLISEUM VIDEO: Beefcake d. Ron Bass. DUSTY: as toilet cleaner. RESTHOLD.

(ICW/FNN) - Mike Sharpe d. Mario Mancini; Tony Atlas/Scott Putski win DQ over Power Twins; Ivan Putski countout over Bob Orton Jr.; Sky Low Low d. Little Martinez; Mr. X d. Kahlua; Dynamic Duo d. Tom Brandi/Ray Odyssey; Vic Steamboat d. Moon-dog Spike. RESTHOLD.

(NWA/SYND.) - [NWA PRO]: Varsity Club d. Trent Knight/Ray Lloyd; Norman d. Rockhard Rick; Eddie Gilbert d. Fred Avery; Skyscrapers d. Steve Casey/Mark Smith; Samoan Swat Team d. Mike Awesome/Lee Scott; Steve Williams d. Snake Brown but is jumped by Freebirds before First Family saves; WORLD TAG TITLE: Terry Gordy/Jimmy Garvin d. Dynamic Dudes on illegal Gordy tripup. REPLAY: Terry Funk uses branding iron on Sting, who juices. PEDICINO'S NOSE: Joe calls for Ric Flair to put Funk out of wrestling. DRAW.

[WORLD WIDE]: Midnight Express d. Jeff James/Keith Steinborn; Steiner Bros. d. Fred Avery/Mark Smith; Ray Lloyd wins DQ over Terry Funk; Gilbert d. Brown; Skyscrapers d. John Brewer/Chance Myers; SST d. Randy Rose/Bucky Sieglar; U.S. TITLE: Lex Luger d. Ranger Ross. DRAW. [MAIN EVENT]: Brian Pillman d. George South; Dingdongs d. Cougar Jay/Steinborn; Skyscrapers d. James/Brewer; Dick Murdoch/Ross win DQ over Militia. ALSO: Flair news conf. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(NWA/TBS) - [POWER HOUR]: Scott Steiner d. Bounty Hunter; Tommy Rich d. Jim Bryant; Dynamic Dudes/Brian Pillman d. Militia/Bill Irwin. WNN: Gordon Solie previews Bash, updates Rude-Warrior, Jerry Blackwell, comments on Sting-Muta. FUNK'S GRILL: Paul E. Dangerously guests. DRAW. [WCW]: Steiners d. Smith/Brewer; Pillman d. Cruel Connection II; Hayes/Garvin d. Rose/Casey;

M Ex d. Militia. DANGER ZONE: Paul E. welcomes Funk. FEATURES: Ricky Steamboat asks for No DQ PPV match vs. Luger, Lex refuses; Flair vows to kill Funk July 23. DRAW-PLUS.

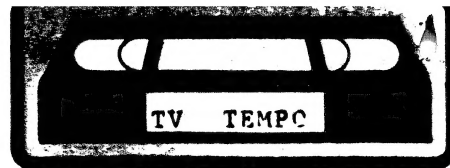
(CWF) - RECAP SHOW: Stomper Harris d. Ron Sexton & gets challenge from Ron Fuller; CWF TITLE: Tom Prichard d. Wendell Cooley for belt w. help from Jerry Stubbs; CAGE MATCH: Jimmy Golden/Mongolian Stomper d. Mortons when Golden uses chain; From MEMPHIS: Robert Fuller/Brian Lee win squash. DRAW.

(PORTLAND) - Beetlejuice d. Col. DeBeers; Al Madril d. Rex King; Scotty the Body/Jonathan Boyd d. S. Rockers when Top Gun (who had been "paid \$5,000") clotheslines Steve Doll; Mid-night Soldier d. C.W. Bergstrom; Billy Jack Haynes vs. Grappler STRETCHER MATCH in progress as show ends. ANGLES: 1) Barry Owen holds Madril to deal to pay for kids' admission; 2) Grappler apologizes for blinding Carl Stiles but plays tape of phone call where he calls Stiles "Helen Keller." POWERSLAM-PLUS.

(AWA) - Tommy Jammer d. Johnny Stewart; Akio Sato wins DQ over Paul Diamond; Ken Patera/Scott Norton d. Destruction Crew when Johnny Valiant runs in w. sledgehammer but Norton destroys all 3; Norton offers \$250,000 if either Hogan, Flair or Larry Z can beat him arm wrestling. CLASSIC: Wendi Richter/Joyce Grable vs. Velvet McIntyre/Judy Martin. DRAW-PLUS....all from "War in the Windy City."

SCALE: PINFALL! - Must See PILEDRIIVER - Excellent POWERSLAM - Good DRAW - Average RESTHOLD - Fair BOMB - Poor PLUS - Middle of scale rating.

LINE OF THE WEEK - 1. Bobby Heenan, WEF, on Dusty Rhodes: "He ought to be in a bathroom on his hands and knees." 2. Jim Cornette, NWA: "Paul E., you look like you want to give blood and forgot to say when." 3. Cornette, PH: "Paul E., you're hanging over my head like elective surgery." 4. Paul E. Dangerously, NME: "The Skyscrapers are HUGE. They're bigger than your belly, Jim Ross." 5. Jesse Ventura, WEF: "With those glasses of yours, McMahon, you could light ants on fire with the sun." 6. Gordon Solie, FCW: "It helps my pacemaker when you don't bring them (Diamond Dolls) by." 7. Lance Russell, NWA: "Theodore R. looks like a sardine mashed between 2 sharks next to the Skyscrapers." 8. T.R. Long, NWA: "There's nothing wrong with my head." 9. Dallas Page, FCW: "The Nasty Boys look like Play-doh dolls. You can mold 'em but you can't destroy 'em." 10. Heenan, WEF, on Rhodes: "American Gasman—is that because of what he does or what he ate?" 11. Gorilla Monsoon & Heenan, WEF: (GM) "What on earth is a widowmaker?" (BH) "Keep pushing me & your wife will know." 12. Robert Fuller, WCCW: "Just like Andrew Jackson was President, the Tennessee Stud is the last of a dying breed." 13. Jim Ross, WWN: "Dangerously went to the Ben Johnson School of Truth-telling." 14. Terry Funk, PH: "On the 23rd, I'm gonna change that WHOOD to a MOO!" 15. Don Coss, Portland: "I think that blimp you guys rode was the one Buddy Rose modeled for." 16. Tony Schiavone, WEF: "That (Duggan) is a look of royalty." 17. Vince McMahon, WEF, on Towers: "What a squash job that was!" 18. Jerry Stubbs, CWF: "Tom Prichard is out in Margueriteville lying in the sun with Jimmy Buffett." 19. Paul E., NME: "The best thing about Tommy Rich being back in the NWA is I can do my impersonation of him." 20. Ross & Cornette, WCCW: (JR) "It was a grammatical faux pas." (JC) "That's a Hawaiian hors d'oeuvre." 21. Robert Anderson, SCW: "I call



Mr. Atlanta's piledriver the Fulton County Face Eraser." 22. Lee Marshall, AWA: "He (Stewart) buried him like a treasure chest."

STRONGEST COMMENTS - 1. Joe Pedicino, NWA: "Ric Flair, put Terry Funk out of wrestling. He's an embarrassment!" 2. Heenan, WEF: "I've carried this program! I've done the best job of journalism in broadcast history!" 3. Flair, WCCW: "Like me, love me, hate me—I am going to KILL Terry Funk in Baltimore."

QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK - 1. Coss, Portland: "Have you (Scotty) ever leased your mouth out as an outboard motor?" 2. Ross, PH: "Gordon's done the news. Why doesn't he do the weather?"

BEST PICTURES - 1. WEF, Fan dressed as Akeem. 2. WCCW, Missy Hyatt's 2-tone heels. 3. NWA, closeup of Teddy Long arguing with fans. 4. WCCW, closeup of Funk on DANGER ZONE.

BEST PROMO - TBS, Michael Hayes NIGHT TRACKS spot.

NICKNAMES OF THE WEEK - 1. "Slim Towers," given to Twin Towers by Ax. 2. "Taco Breath," given to Tito Santana by Slick.

BEST SONG - Rougeaus/Jimmy Hart, WEF, "Singin' in the Ring." WORST SONG - Dusty Rhodes, WEF, for "Mister Rogers" theme.

DREADED GLITCH AWARDS - 1. CWF, for graphics of Jackie JULTON and BRAIN Lee. 2. NWA, for graphic of RICK Flair. 3. WWTX, Columbus GA, for running 9-month-old NWA MAIN EVENT.

BLOOPER AWARDS - 1. ACW, for never naming masked team. 2. Demolition, for calling Gene Okerlund "Howard." 3. Tim Dix, SCW, for calling Steve Reeves Steve BENNETT.

BOO AWARD - 1. WEF, for Dusty Rhodes toilet-cleaning seg. This one gets the Worst Taste of All Time Award. I wasn't even eating and I still wanted to vomit.

#### TUBE TALK

The Paul Diamond-Akio Sato match from WAR IN THE WINDY CITY was one of the weekend's better matches....Ditto to Dustin Rhodes-Kendall Windham on FCW. The PWF logo & open has been dropped and no mention made of the belt....The CWF Knoxville matches were some of the worst lighted ever in that promotion....Joe Pedicino's editorial was one of the strongest and most appropriate yet on NWA syndie....POWER HOUR Saturday a.m. replay will be dropped in fall by TBS.... Some do care: TBS sports v.p. Don McGuire suggested GREAT-EST HITS NWA segs between Braves twinbills. WCCW is also being promoted with BRAVES & OLYMPIC GOLD now as part of TBS PRIME TIME SPORTS SATURDAY.

Jesse & Vince were a bit off last weekend but the Tony-Gorilla-Heenan tension was strong as ever....Scratch Jesse as an NWA mike candidate. He has a personal services contract with WEF....The Flair-Turner WRESTLING '89 cover was shown on NWA syndies. Congrats to my friends at PWI on their fine 10th anni issue....Did you know Cactus Jack Manson of WCCW was a broadcast major in college? FSB.

\*\*\* MATWATCH BULLETIN \*\*\*

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. - WEF wrestler Jake Roberts has been convicted of aggravated battery against a Florida man and is in jail awaiting sentence.

A Volusia County Circuit Court jury found Roberts, 34, guilty for an alleged attack on 27-year-old John Bartlett after a night of drinking last May 8. Roberts had claimed self-defense but Bartlett said he needed surgery to repair a bone around his eye.

Judge Gayle Graziano revoked Roberts' \$2,500 bail. Sentencing guidelines call for a 12-to-30 month jail term in state prison for people, like Roberts, with no record.



# COMINGS & GOINGS

**LOT OF CRAP:** The Dusty Rhodes AMERICANA seg on the past two weeks' WEF shows was deleted in about 15 markets where program directors preview the tape. The episode, featuring Dusty as a janitor, showed him reaching his hand into a toilet and the image was clearly one of a man pulling human waste from the bowl. We'll editorialize on this next week.

**VIEWER VICTORY:** Thanks to persistence of MAT-WATCHER Mike Gendelman and a number of other viewers, Cablevision in the New York area has restored the Madison Square Garden Network to its systems, though not as a basic service in all instances. The decision ends a year-long fight to restore live WEF matches for cable viewers.

**HURRY, OWEN:** The Stampede accident (see THIS WEEK'S HEADLINES) may expedite the return of Owen Hart to Calgary rings. Speaking of....we debut Stampede results in TV TEMPO this week.

**NWA NOTES:** D.J. Peterson had an NWA tryout in the past 10 days....the Fayetteville NC syndie taping was called a "hot" one as far as angles. One of the TV main events will be Steiners vs. Militia....the Marietta TBS tapings last Thursday did a top job of setting up some of the Bash matchups, particularly the Road Warriors-SST cage match.

**OCTOBER OPTIONS:** Looks like Greensboro or Atlanta for the October PPV for the NWA and I'm betting Atlanta because TBS badly wants to hold a major card in its home base, plus Atlanta is only about 15% wired for addressable pay, so the local turnout would not be greatly affected.

**STARRCADE SPECS:** If you want to look ahead to STARRCADE, a good bet would be Flair-Luger with the roles reversed from last year, Road Warriors-Skyscrapers and possibly Steamboat-Muta.

**T&A TOPS:** The match to watch on the July 29 SATURDAY NIGHT'S MAIN EVENT will be the Tully & Arn vs. Demolition WEF title rematch and I'm banking on a title change, though Titan has fooled us before (remember Savage-Honky on the '88 MAIN EVENT). T&A will probably have series with the Hart Foundation (SUMMER SLAM), Sheepwackers and probably the Rockers at WRESTLEMANIA VI.

**HOGAN'S HOST:** A lot of early speculation is that Anabolic Warrior will turn and face Hogan at WM6. I dispute that: 1) it would be too much of a duplicate of this year's scenario with Savage and 2) some key insiders believe Hogan-Zeus will carry the day next April.

**DOUBLE AGENT???:** The NWA was all set to close a deal with a Peoria station for a key Saturday a.m. slot. Coincidentally, an eleventh-hour offer came from the WEF, promising the station the exact same percentage to the decimal point of local gate receipts for the slot. The WEF won the time and the NWA was consigned to a late Friday time. Was sabotage involved? Maybe, maybe not. But speculation is resting on a former NWA employee who may have leaked details of the offer to the WEF.

**ROBERT'S RULES:** Extremely mixed feelings on Robert Fuller's return to CWF as booker. One element believes he'll do "as well" as anyone since

Eddie Gilbert left but a far greater number of insiders feel Fuller won't long wait to bring in the old Fuller-Armstrong cast which had the CWF on the brink of extinction when Ron Fuller sold to David Woods in February 1988.

**THINK TWICE:** Don't put great stock in a passel of rumors that Robert's return is the last step before Woods sells back to Ron. It could happen. But I'm told on good authority Ron Fuller, since becoming a majority owner of a minor league hockey team, is not that interested in returning full-time to owning a wrestling company.

**ANOTHER TRY?:** Talk is surfacing that former NWA booker George Scott and a partner may try to open an independent promotion in the Midwest.

**PWF TITLE:** By the time some of you read this, the PWF tourney may be history but with Steelman apparently going on in to Titan, speculation is on Al Perez as the new favorite, in light of his recent babyface turn.

**THE TASTE OF KENT:** A story from SCW...after the recent Southern show at Quality Ford in Columbus, Ga., Jerry Blackwell---still being aided by oxygen---went to the car dealer for the payoff. Blackwell was given \$900, well short of a promised \$3,000. The dealer told Jerry, MATWATCH has learned, he had already paid manager Samuel Kent, who lined up the show, the \$3,000. Sources tell us when the wrestlers went to Kent for their pay, he claimed he'd have to wait for an August show to pay off. Insiders say Kent had used the money for personal affairs and finally borrowed the cash to make the payoffs. Ted Allen and Jim Powell are reportedly no longer using Kent in towns they book.

**AND FINALLY:** Alabama Secretary of State Perry Hand told a business group he was worried about a poll showing 90 percent of people who watch pro wrestling believe it's real. "But that's not the disturbing thing," Hand said. "Sixty percent of them are registered voters!"

## SYNDICATION RATINGS

Week Ending June 9	Rating	Stations	Pct. U.S.
WEF	8.3	239	96%
NWA	4.7	145	91%
Week Ending June 16			
WEF	8.9	249	97%
NWA	6.4	145	91%

(ANALYSIS: The big jump in NWA numbers for the June 16 week came from the 1.9 national increase from CLASH VII. WEF has tailed off 1.4-2.0 points the last four weeks from its post-WM5 10-plus numbers but most is attributable to normal summer dropoff.)

**BACK ISSUES:** No back issues left before No. 23 but all after No. 24 are available for \$1.00 each or \$4.00 for any five. Check, cash or money order to: STEVE BEVERLY, 213 PINE HILLS AVE., AUBURN AL 36830.

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CASIO YAMAMOTO, 305 KOPO OJIKI, 2-2 KANSHUJI  
HIGHASHIDE-CHO, YAMASHINA-KU KYOTO 607 NIPPON,  
JAPAN, is offering the UWF Japan shows from Osaka  
(5/4), and Tokyo Bay (5/21), along with the Chigu-  
sa Nagayo retirement show for \$30 each.

HARRY WHITE, 1075 McCAUSLAND, ST. LOUIS MO  
63117, has Xerox copies of every St. Louis arena  
program from 1969-85, including Bruno vs. Race,  
Race vs. Backlund, Brody vs. Andre.

NANCY RIDLEY, 7512 MALLARD DR., ST. LOUIS MO  
63133, is looking for any Ric Flair pictures or  
memorabilia available.

I am trying to get a new trade for ATLANTIC  
COAST tapes. My source dried up and I owe a MAT-  
WATCHer a tape. I can offer virtually every  
other promotion in exchange, plus a dub of the  
recent MOTOR CITY spectacular in the Detroit area.

### THE SCREENING ROOM: Morton Downey Jr.

When Morton Downey Jr. first premiered on WOR  
in New York two years ago, I enjoyed his offbeat,  
hyper version of the old JOE PYNE SHOW. But view-  
ing the June 30 edition of MORT, his third attempt  
to deal with pro wrestling---this time the question  
of deregulation---is a prime example of why Mort  
is leaving the air this fall.

First, someone ought to ban forever and a day  
Lou Albano from ever appearing on a program grap-  
pling a serious question (not that one could ever  
parallel Mort to seriousness). From the minute Lou  
appeared, the entire hour disintegrated into a  
program length angle which one could not distinguish  
from Saturday on the WEF, only it may have served  
to make Brother Love appear intelligent.

Independent promoter Mitch Steinfeld was the  
designated heel on this show, taking the stand for  
deregulation and taking enormous heat for allegedly  
not paying his wrestlers. In between adjusting the  
volume control, one learned Steinfeld was once hit  
with a steel trash can by Abdullah the Butcher  
after allegedly shorting Abby on a payment.

Larry Sharpe of "Monster Factory" fame and pro-  
moter Dennis Coralluzzo took the lead for governing  
commissions and legitimately tried to present  
reasoned viewpoints. But their effectiveness died  
when Albano turned the show into a circus (and Lou  
was with Sharpe and Dennis).

At one point, I timed six and a half minutes of

nothing but non-stop yelling by eight verbal comba-  
tants, including Mort. All that was needed was an  
invasion by Roy Innis, Geraldo Rivera and the Skin-  
heads and the chairs would have flown.

Mort, as usual, left no question as to his view:  
"I like people who hire me. I like people who pay  
me. I like people who treat me well. I like Vince  
McMahon." And Albano's chaotic boosting of the NWA  
is not exactly the best commercial Ted Turner has  
going for him.

This whole exaggerated scenario is the very rea-  
son why I felt the WEF would have a big, quick suc-  
cess and then cool off in three years. But Titan  
Sports appears sane compared to Mort. Five nights  
a week of this would send anyone to the programming  
graveyard. Then again, if Mort likes wrestling as  
he contends, maybe the NWA should hire him to do  
WORLD WIDE. Just don't let him go into any rest-  
rooms in San Francisco.

MIKE —  
We're having computer woes.  
Did you send me a renewal?  
CABLE RATINGS STEVE

Week Ending June 27	Rating	Share	Homes
WEF PRIME TIME (USA 6/26)	3.5	5.8	1.65 mil.
WEF ALL-AMERICAN (USA 6/25)	2.9	9.1	1.37 mil.
NWA MAIN EVENT (TBS 6/25)	2.5	6.0	1.23 mil.
NWA CLASH Repeat (TBS 6/27)	1.9	6.1	933,000
NWA WORLD CH. (TBS 6/24)	1.8	4.9	900,000
NWA POWER HOUR (TBS 6/23)	1.7	3.7	835,000
NWA POWER Repeat (TBS 6/24)	0.7	6.5	345,000

Week Ending July 3	Rating	Share	Homes
WEF ALL-AMERICAN (USA 7/2)	2.7	8.9	1.31 mil.
WEF PRIME TIME (USA 7/3)	2.7	5.0	1.30 mil.
NWA MAIN EVENT (7/2)	2.4	6.1	1.18 mil.
NWA WORLD CHAMP. (TBS 7/1)	2.2	6.1	1.08 mil.
NWA GREATEST HITS (TBS 6/30)	2.1	5.0	1.03 mil.
NWA POWER HOUR (TBS 6/30)	1.7	4.1	835,000
NWA POWER Repeat (TBS 7/1)	0.6	6.4	295,000

(ANALYSIS: Key notes...a powerful rating for PTW  
on the 6/26 show and both WEF shows were notably hit  
by a dropoff over 4th of July weekend, yet the NWA  
numbers looked promising. Two points: WCW went  
over a 6% share for the first time since December  
and MAIN EVENT has had two 6-plus share weeks for  
the first time since March. Did Ross's return on  
TBS make that much difference? Also, POWER HOUR has  
improved on the 11 p.m.-Midnight NIGHT TRACKS ra-  
tings by 60% on Friday nights. Also, NWA GREATEST  
HITS beat both BRAVES games (1.3 and 2.0) around  
which it was sandwiched June 30.)

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